FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

Baptist Churches, North
National Baptist Convention
Free Baptist Churches
Christian Church
Christian Reformed Church in North America
Churches of God in N. A. (General Eldership)
Congregational Churches
Disciples of Christ
Friends
Evangelical Synod of N. A.
Evangelical Association
Methodist Episcopal Church
Methodist Episcopal Church, South
African M. E. Church
African M. E. Zion Church
Colored M. E. Church in America
Methodist Protestant Church
Moravian Church
Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (South)
Primitive Methodist Church
Protestant Episcopal Commissions on Christian Unity and Social Service
Reformed Church in America
Reformed Church in the U. S.
Reformed Episcopal Church
Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod
Seventh Day Baptist Churches
United Brethren Church
United Evangelical Church
United Presbyterian Church

NATIONAL OFFICES, 612 UNITED CHARITIES BUILDING, 105 EAST 22d STREET, NEW YORK

Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

To the Constituent Bodies of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

Since the last report of the Council to its constituent bodies a Quadrennial meeting has been held, and we are herewith submitting the reports for the Quadrennium and the records of the Quadrennial meeting, together with the volumes issued by the Committee on the War and Religious Outlook since our last report.

The meeting at Boston was generally regarded as the most representative and significant meeting of the Council that has ever been held. It was marked by its fine spirit of fellowship, its unity of purpose, and the spiritual impressiveness of its program, in which representatives of churches of other lands participated, marking the meeting as one of world fellowship and cooperation.

The most important actions taken related to the report of the Committee on Methods of Cooperation, which we herewith submit, calling special attention to the adoption of the seven recommendations at its close.

Since that meeting the Executive and Administrative Committees have proceeded in accordance with the actions of this report, and they have also exercised their good offices in developing a Consultative Committee of the Inter-Board organizations. A conference of Representatives of the Denominational Forward Movements has also been held and others are anticipated.

The Council as now organized is constituted as follows:

The Central Department, including the Advisory Committee of Forethought and Outlook; the Department of Interpretation and Religious Publicity; the Washington Committee, including the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains; the Chicago Committee; the Committee on Religious Work in the Canal Zone and other similar special committees.

The Commission on Evangelism and Life Service.

The Commission on Christian Education.

The Commissions on Social Welfare, including the Commission on the Church and Social Service and the Commission on Temperance.

The Commissions on International Relations, including the Commissions on International Justice and Goodwill, on Relations with Religious Bodies in Europe, on Relations with France and Belgium, on Relations with the Orient, and cooperation with the General Committee of the Universal Conference of the Church of Christ on Life and Work.

The Commission on Negro Churches and Inter-Racial Relations, and the Commission on Works of Mercy and Relief.

The Commission on Councils of Churches, for the promotion of local federations or councils.

In connection with the report of the Committee on Methods of Cooperation, we desire to call attention to the fact that the denominational machinery does not, as yet, readily lend itself to cooperative service, especially so far as financial necessities are concerned. Recommendations concerning this matter have been made to the various authoritative committees or officials of the denominations, and will be brought before the denominational assemblies or ad interim organizations. It may perhaps be noted

that the budget requested for coordinating the work of all these denominations through the Federal Council is considerably less than that which is expended by several of them for the coordination of their own denominational departments.

The Church as a whole has probably never faced greater problems than confront it today. Fundamental among them is the developing of our evangelism and Christian education in a way that will be far more effective in reaching the individual life and conscience with the Gospel and leading men into personal discipleship to our Lord Jesus Christ. This discipleship, moreover, must include every area of human life. The Gospel must be brought to bear upon all our social and industrial order, upon all our inter-racial and international relations. All these great tasks call the churches to the most effective cooperation with one another that can possibly be secured.

The Administrative Committee of the Council invites the most careful consideration of the whole question of Christian cooperation by the constituent bodies. We believe that the most fundamental element in this problem is the Federal Council of the churches, the one body which is constituted by, and subject to, the churches themselves.

Constructive and sympathetic criticism is earnestly desired. Our task is far from simple, and yet its difficulties, great as they are, must not deter us from finding the way to such a cooperative organization as will combine freedom and unity for the most effective service.

Faithfully yours,

By order of the Administrative Committee.

Baptist Churches, North
ALBERT G. LAWSON
National Baptist Convention
E. C. MORRIS
Free Baptist Churches
RIVINGTON D. LORD
Christian Church
R. C. HELFENSTEIN
Churches of God in N. A. (General Eldership)
S. G. YAHN
Congregational Churches
HARRY R. MILES
Disciples of Christ
FINIS S. IDLEMAN
Friends
CHARLES E. TEBBETTS
Evangelical Synod of N. A.
WILLIAM E. BOURQUIN
Evangelical Association
S. C. BREYFOGEL
Methodist Episcopal Church
EZRA S. TIPPLE
Methodist Episcopal Church, South
JAMES CANNON, JR.
African M. E. Church
JOHN R. HAWKINS
African M. E. Zion Church
W. L. LEE
Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America
WILLIAM Y. BELL
Methodist Protestant Church
THOMAS H. LEWIS
Moravian Church
HARRY E. STOCKER
Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
JOHN A. MARQUIS
Presbyterian Church in U. S.
R. F. CAMPBELL
Primitive Methodist Church
E. HUMPHRIES
Protestant Episcopal Commissions on Christian Unity and Social Service
JOHN M. GLENN
Reformed Church in America
I. W. GOWEN
Reformed Church in the U. S.
RUFUS W. MILLER
Reformed Episcopal Church
ROBERT W. PEACH
Reformed Presbyterian Church (General Synod)
JOHN PARKS
Seventh Day Baptist Churches
GEORGE B. SHAW
United Brethren in Christ
WILLIAM M. BELL
United Evangelical Church
WILLIAM M. STANFORD
United Presbyterian Church
R. A. HUTCHISON

Denominational Representatives of the Administrative Committee.

JOHN M. MOORE, *Chairman*
RUFUS W. MILLER, *Vice-Chairman*

ROBERT E. SPEER, *President*
WALTER R. LAMBUTH, *Chairman of the Executive Committee*
CHARLES S. MACFARLAND, *General Secretary*
SAMUEL M. CAVERT, *General Secretary*

May 1, 1921.

Report of Committee on Methods of Coöperation

(As adopted at the Quadrennial Meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, December 4, 1920.)

I

WE do not deem it necessary to enter into any extensive "review of the cooperative situation." This work has been done thoroughly by another committee which is to report to the Federal Council. This other committee is the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook. It is an independent committee originally constituted by the Administrative Committee of the Council and by the General War Time Commission of the Churches to study the lessons of the war and the war experience for the Christian Church. Among the reports of this committee is one now in press dealing at great length with the very problems referred to the Special Committee of Ten which the meeting at Cleveland instructed the Administrative Committee to appoint and which is now consolidated with our committee. This report provides a sufficient review of the existing situation in the field of local and also of denominational and interdenominational cooperation. We need not cover that ground. We do deem it desirable, however, to set forth as clearly and yet as briefly as possible five aspects of the cooperative situation which we face and then to go on to consider the duty of the Federal Council in the light of these facts.

1. The first fact is the unmistakable and resolute intention of the churches which compose the Federal Council to maintain and enlarge a spirit of acquaintance and understanding and common purpose. This spirit has been growing for years. It has been strengthened by many processes, by common tasks and dangers, by the increasing sense of community of fundamental convictions, by ever-multiplying personal friendships, by common traditions, by common ends, most of all by the unity of the one Divine Spirit and the one Divine Lord. We have been shown clearly that the spirit of fellowship and common purpose is indestructible. It is an outstanding and indisputable fact.

2. The second fact is the vivifying of the consciousness of denominational personality. Many reasons lie back of this. Among the most notable, no doubt, are the educational effects of the effort of the churches to care for their own sons, and to fulfill their own clear duties in the war time; the brotherly and mutually respectful efforts of the churches to apportion among them the great task of the whole Church so that each part may do its full share worthily; the growing intimacy of acquaintance within each denomination keeping pace with growing interdenominational acquaintance; the desire to get our Lord's work done in the most efficient and simple and conscientious ways. The happy fact is that this increased consciousness and effectiveness of denominational action is not hostile to the general spirit of cooperation and unity. On the contrary, they welcome and support each other. The whole is stronger for the strength of its parts. Each part is stronger for the strength of the whole.

3. Thirdly, it seems clear that these two facts have not yet been satisfactorily coordinated. In form the Federal Council appears to be such a coordination as ought to be satisfactory. It expresses our community of spiritual purpose and it recognizes and safeguards the autonomy and personality of its constituent bodies. It has rendered manifest and invaluable service. It is difficult to conceive how the churches could have done without it during the last decade. Indeed, they could not have done without it,

or some kindred agency which they would have been obliged to set up in its place. At the same time, from whatever reason, whether from lack of sufficient personnel or of financial support, or from inability to command the assent of the churches to the exercise of its full functions, it is clear that while apparently adapted in form to serve the churches in conducting or coordinating their cooperative work, the situation has been too complicated and confused to allow the adequate cooperative service required. Much pioneer work has been done. We must now ask whether another step forward may not be taken. We believe the present situation and our war experience have prepared the way for this and make the demand for it.

4. In the fourth place we have to consider with as great care and detachment as we can the lessons from the experience of the churches during the last few years in the field of cooperative endeavor. Without attempting now to examine or appraise this experience in detail, three things are clear as bearing on our present problem. (1) First, the Interchurch World Movement would not have been possible if there had not been a great body of people in the churches who were ready for and who craved a fuller experience of the spirit of cooperation in action than had been supplied. How large a proportion of the churches this body comprised there is no means of telling. Neither is there any way of knowing how far those who were opposed to the movement would have been opposed also to a cooperative movement free from those characteristics of the Interchurch Movement which they disapproved. On the whole we are convinced that the great body, if not practically the whole body of the Christian people in the churches constituting the Federal Council, are desirous of a far larger measure of common and cooperative action if carried forward with wisdom and care and within right Christian methods. (2) That some way must be found to coordinate the cooperative missionary and educational organizations of the churches with one another and to relate these to some cooperative organization representing the churches functioning in their denominational personality or ecclesiastical authority. These two problems were faced in the Interchurch Movement and have not been solved there. They are met and must be solved in our present cooperative situation. What light does the experience of the churches in the Interchurch World Movement throw upon them? This—that an adequate and satisfactory cooperative movement must be officially representative of the churches ecclesiastically; that it must be related satisfactorily also to the cooperative bodies of the active missionary and educational agencies of the churches which administer the churches' aggressive work; that it must secure the full freedom both of the cooperating denominations and of these cooperative interdenominational bodies at the same time that it furnishes the church as a whole with the instrumentalities for effective cooperative action.

(3) A committee was appointed by the General Committee of the Interchurch Movement to recommend to it the wise course of action to conserve any values in the Movement, and to provide for the carrying forward of those portions of its work which the churches desire to have continued. This committee after three days of conference with representatives of some of the churches, and of the six cooperative bodies representing the missionary and educational agencies of the churches, adopted on November 5, 1920, the following resolution, which we herewith report to the Federal Council:

> "It was moved that in bringing about the future conservation of the values of the Interchurch World Movement, we request the Federal Council to call a thoroughly representative conference of the following agencies in the month of December, if possible, or in early January, to work out the best plan for bringing about the mutually most helpful working relationships and arrangements on their part.

The agencies are:

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America
The Reorganization Committee of the Interchurch World Movement
The Home Missions Council
The Foreign Missions Conference
The Council of Women for Home Missions
The Federation of Woman's Boards of Foreign Missions
The Sunday-School Council of Evangelical Denominations
The Council of Church Boards of Education

the personnel program and all other arrangements of the conference to be determined by the chairman and general secretary (or other two officials) of each of the foregoing agencies in consultation."

5. The fifth aspect of this situation with which your committee was appointed to deal is the spirit and disposition of the Federal Council itself, as illustrated especially in the report which was presented at Cleveland on the Constitution and Organization of the Federal Council. That report was approved by the Cleveland meeting so far as its recommendations could be carried out "under the Constitution, By-Laws, or previous action of the Council," any further "recommendations and suggested constitutional changes covering the questions in hand" to be presented to this meeting of the Council now assembled in Boston. This Cleveland report conceived the Federal Council as "an instrument of service" and sought for it "such form and use" as would enable it to do whatever God had appointed for it. No other conception is entertainable. The Federal Council exists for the service of the church and the work of the church, and it is for the representatives of the churches composing it to determine here what they wish it to do and what responsibilities they wish to lay upon it. It can be whatever they choose to make it. It is the only agency in America formally established and constituted by the evangelical churches. Its unalterable preamble states securely the rock on which they stand:

"In the providence of God, the time has come when it seems fitting more fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service, and cooperation among them."

Its fundamental plan sets forth a field of action inclusive of all that the present situation calls us to do together. It declares that the Council is established "for the prosecution of work that can be better done in union than in separation" and defines its object to be:

I. To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church.

II. To bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world.

III. To encourage devotional fellowship and mutual counsel concerning the spiritual life and religious activities of the churches.

IV. To secure a larger combined influence for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.

V. To assist in the organization of local branches of the Federal Council to promote its aims in their communities.

It would seem to be clear that in form at least the churches have in the Federal Council an instrumentality adequate in its constitutional authority to serve them as they please in the field of cooperative service. For reasons already suggested the Federal Council may not have adequately occupied this field. Should it now move forward to do so?

II

The second charge laid upon our committee was to make any recommendation and to suggest any constitutional changes we might deem desirable.

1. We desire to set forth first our clear and positive conviction that there is work to be done in the name and for the sake of the churches which it is the legitimate business and the duty of the Federal Council to do. There is no other agency representing the churches to do it.

We have in mind the forms of service presented in the report at Cleveland.

"To provide points of contact between the denominations through their recognized representatives, in order to facilitate understanding and sympathy between them;

"To study the program of cooperative tasks, suggesting measures and methods by which such tasks can be done effectively; and undertake whatever work properly falls within its sphere;

"To speak with care and a due sense of responsibility for the churches on those matters on which there is a general agreement;

"To serve as a clearing-house of information about those things that are being done by its constituent bodies and other organizations affiliated or cooperating with it;

"To be an organ of publicity through which that which is of interest to all may be effectively conveyed to each and to the public;

"To function in other forms of cooperative work for which there may be no adequate provision."

These are real and sober tasks.

We have in mind also the tasks which are included in the framework of the existing commissions of the Council. But this framework needs to be filled out at many points. There are some nine or ten of these commissions now, with several additional committees. Without disparagement of the others, especially those dealing with social questions, we desire to lay all the emphasis we can command on two of them—the Commission on Evangelism and the Commission on Christian Education. These are two problems on which our churches for their very life's sake must work unitedly. We must set flowing a new and deep tide both of individual and of social evangelism. And we must deal steadily and constructively with the threefold educational problem: first, of recovering their place in higher education for the spiritual ideas essential to the very existence of the Christian view; second, of supplementing our secular public education by religious teaching; and, thirdly, of maintaining and elevating religious education in the Christian home and church. And it is here in the field of education where cooperation is most obviously necessary that it has thus far been found most difficult to bring together the forces which must be made one.

And there are also other concrete needs not now provided for in the Council's agencies which in our judgment call for some provision, either directly by the Federal Council or indirectly through it by related cooperative agencies. These include (1) the friendly and mutually assisting integration of the denominational promotional or forward movements, (2) the provision of some board or committee of forethought and outlook which will study and plan for us all, with no administrative authority, but to suggest approaching needs and the requisite preparations to meet them. (3) Some adequate arrangement for supplying information and interpretation regarding the work and activity of the churches. (4) An adequate, continuous, and wisely directed endeavor of all our forces in behalf of a more general acceptance of true principles of stewardship both of money and of life. (5) Some facilities for the general relationship of all the Christian organizations and activities of women which would provide them with a common meeting ground and clearing-house and make the facts of their work and relationships accessible to the churches. (6) Some central study of the problem of lay activities in the churches and some helpful interrelation of the denominational efforts to deal with this problem. (7) The promotion of "works of serving love," of those deeds of mercy and benevolence in which Christians unite and which powerfully express their common faith. Many other suggestions have been made to us, but enough has been said to show the wide field of need and opportunity before the cooperative agency which the churches have created and may now use.

2. We do not believe that it is necessary for any amendments of the Constitution to be made at this meeting to enable the Federal Council to do this work or any other work which the churches need to have done in the present emergency. If any such amendment is necessary it can be easily accomplished. It is not necessary to refer it to all the separate church courts. The Federal Council itself can make any amendment desired in its Constitution "by a majority vote of the members (i.e., the denominational representatives present at the quadrennial meeting) followed by a majority vote of the representatives of the several constituent bodies, each voting separately." The By-Laws can be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote of the members present. There are some minor verbal changes which might well be made, but these are not important; and while we shall be glad to propose them if desired, and while, later, changes in the Constitution may be deemed desirable, it seems to us that it will be better to focus all our discussion at present on the more vital question: Do the churches want the Federal Council to take up a larger measure of actual cooperative work in their name and under their authority? If so, what do they want it to do? And are they prepared to provide for the doing of it? The difficulty in the way of adequate service in the past on the part of the Federal Council has not lain in any limitations of its Constitution. This is surprisingly broad and comprehensive. It has been due to three things: first, doubt as to the scope of action on the part of the Council which the churches would approve; second, inadequate staff and personnel; and third, inadequate financial support. Other limitations also have arisen from the latter. We desire to place this matter before the Council stripped of all unreality and illusion. Are the churches prepared to deal adequately with these three matters? Will they support a policy of courageous and progressive service? Will they supply the men who are required for such service and leadership? Will they contribute the necessary funds? The changed conditions of church life and work today make it difficult, if not impossible, to finance such a movement by independent financial solicitation. Moreover, it is a movement of cooperation. Individuals reply to requests for help: "We wish to give all we have to our denominational agencies and to leave it to them to give what they deem wise

to the necessary interdenominational and cooperative machinery." Will the churches agree to provide now a budget of $300,000 per annum and to increase it as may be required from year to year? We urge that this Council give an affirmative answer to these questions, so far as it may be competent to do so, and that we all seek to secure supporting action from our respective denominations or their agencies.

3. The Council has already been authorized by many of its constituent bodies to enter into conference with other interdenominational organizations. We believe, therefore, that it should now call the suggested conference of the various inter-board agencies. It is clear that there should be the fullest and most brotherly and trustful discussion of the present problems in the field of our cooperative relationships. There are difficulties in the form of the proposed conference, and many problems will be sure to arise in it and from it, but these are slight in comparison with the harm which might ensue if Christian men did not meet now for the fullest study of this vitally important issue. The delegates to this conference will, of necessity, have to carry back any proposals springing from it to the bodies which sent them, and any new general plan of cooperation involving the churches should be submitted to the denominational courts or other authorities.

4. As we survey the present situation, it seems to us desirable that the Federal Council should make its own position and attitude unmistakably clear. We believe that it should declare its readiness to make any changes or reorganization or adjustment whatsoever within its constitutional character and its responsibility to the constituent churches that may be necessary to enable it to render any service required by the churches in their cooperative work, which cannot be better provided otherwise; as through such agencies as the Foreign Missions Conference, Home Missions Council, etc.; that it is ready to enter into any relationship with the inter-board bodies which are or may be affiliated or coordinated with it which will enable them all better to serve one another and the church and will secure the two desired ends of freedom and union; that in any closer coordination of the Council and the inter-board bodies there should be such careful adjustment of spheres as to avoid all waste of effort and to secure the fullest unity of counsel and of action; that the Council should be prepared to provide such committee arrangements in the matter of administration and coordination as would promote both liberty and order. We have said that we did not see that any changes in the Constitution of the Council are necessary at present to enable the Council flexibly to meet the present situation. We would, however, recommend that Article VIII of the By-Laws, relating to the Commissions of the Council, be referred to the Executive or Administrative Committee, with power to modify this paragraph, and also to make any changes in the Administrative Committee or the commission and committee organizations of the Council which it may deem wise, the Constitution and all other provisions of the By-Laws being left untouched until the next quadrennial meeting of the Council, or, if need be, until a special meeting.

To bring the matter before the Federal Council in convenient form for action we recommend:

1. The Council believes that the time has come for fuller action on its part in the fulfillment of the purpose of its establishment "for the prosecution of work that can be better done in union than in separation." The Council instructs the Executive and Administrative Committees to plan the work of the Council in accordance with this view, ever having in mind its duly defined field of constitutional action and taking such steps as will maintain the closest possible relationships between it and the constituent denominations.

2. The Council authorizes the Executive Committee, as assured resources may warrant, to strengthen the Secretarial Staff of the Council by the appointment of such additional secretaries as it may deem necessary to enable the Council to carry forward a larger work with the confidence and support of the churches.

3. The Council requests the constituent bodies to provide for the support of the Council and its work on the scale of $300,000 per annum for the next two years, and it asks these bodies to accept their equitable apportionment of this amount, as may be suggested by the Administrative Committee.

4. The Council authorizes such a conference with the inter-board agencies as has been suggested, for the purposes specified, with the understanding that any general plan of cooperation involving the denominations in any way not already approved by them in connection with the Federal Council or the inter-board bodies must be referred to the denominational courts or other authorities.

5. The Council approves the statement of the Committee on Methods of Cooperation with regard to the readiness of the Council to adjust its organization, within its constitutional character and responsibility to the churches, in any way that may be necessary to enable it to be of service to the churches or to any of their agencies.

6. The Council refers to the Executive Committee with power the article numbered eight, of the By-Laws, with regard to the Commissions of the Council, and authorizes it to make any ad interim changes which it may deem wise in the commission and committee organization (including the Administrative Committee) and to report to the next meeting of the Council the appropriate wording of by-law eight.

7. The Council expresses the conviction that out of the experiences and discussions of the present time there shall come the achievement of a richer form of expression of that "spirit of fellowship, service, and cooperation" in which the Federal Council began and which it is its duty and its joy to promote.

The seven recommendations in the report are here printed in their final form as slightly amended at a few points when adopted by the Council.

The members of the Committee on Methods of Cooperation which submitted the above report were as follows:

Peter Ainslie
Alfred Williams Anthony
R. F. Campbell
James Cannon, Jr.
Charles F. Carter
Edward D. Eaton
John M. Glenn
Isaac W. Gowen
Howard B. Grose
William I. Haven
Orrin R. Judd
Henry Churchill King
Frederick H. Knubel
Albert G. Lawson
John A. Marquis
Shailer Mathews
William F. McDowell
Carl E. Milliken
Frank Mason North
George W. Richards
Robert E. Speer
J. Ross Stevenson
James I. Vance
Charles L. White
Luther B. Wilson

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